Motivating Students

By Marinel D. McGrath, MASCD President

Those who work in the field of education try to focus on improving teaching and learning with the tools of data analysis, curriculum frameworks, and assessment. While these efforts are critical to serving our students, we should not lose sight of the importance and power of the teacher to attend to the whole student. One of the key values that guides my work, and about which I am passionate, is that I believe that as public school educators, we are “guardians of children.” I believe that the ultimate goal of our work is to serve children and young adults and to search continuously for ways to serve them better. This issue of Perspectives presents four dynamic essays on the power and influence teachers can and do have to help students develop into individuals who want to learn, will perform better on assessments, and who will come to know and appreciate the sheer joy of learning.

Jonathan C. Erwin provides insights into better understanding the role motivation plays in the life of a student and how this impacts teachers. He provides a thoughtful approach to bumping “them up a notch.” Certainly we can all benefit from learning about these strategies so that students are provided with what they need to be more “inspired learners.”

Peter Holtz and Karen Langlais remind us of how fragile our students can be, especially during the middle school years. They offer an approach that helps students better appreciate their own talents and abilities by using Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences. An added benefit to this approach is that it also “helps teachers better understand their students.”

Paul S. Haughey argues the case for the importance of the educator in developing proper relationships with students. He states that “…it is the educator, the teacher, who stands side by side with the student as a guide through the learning process; it is the educator who develops close relationships with families. To that end, Dr. Haughey shares his “Rules of the Road” for students and educators to help develop these relationships.

Hopefully, you will find these articles insightful, and they will inspire you to reflect on ways to be excellent models of support for students. The quality of educator-student relationships determines the quality of the schools. I believe that if we take the time to know our students, we will find ways to understand their needs so we can motivate and support them. Building this understanding through reflection will enable us to develop a shared vision for supporting our youth, and it will enable us to support, challenge, and collaborate with each other for the benefit of our students.
Boosting Students’ Intrinsic Motivation
By Jonathan C. Erwin

These kids are phototropic! They have NO MOTIVATION!” a colleague bellowed as he entered the faculty room. I have to admit, although I thought I knew what phototropic meant, I looked it up. I shook my head, smiling to myself as I read the definition. According to Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, phototropism is the “movement of an organism toward a source of light.” I had a picture in my mind of a classroom of students sitting passively with blank expressions, leaning slightly toward the window as my colleague plodded along with his lecture. Although I winced at his analogy of students being like potted plants, I could think of some classes I’d taught in the past where some of my own students had demonstrated that same lack of enthusiasm for what I thought was an exciting lesson plan. Facing classes of unmotivated students day after day can be highly frustrating, leading to the kind of outburst my colleague had just displayed.

Fortunately, I was not experiencing that frustration any more. I had attended a training session during the previous summer and learned some useful information about human motivation. What I learned was that my frustrated colleague was fundamentally wrong. Students may seem not to have any motivation. But catch them when they aren’t in class. They have motivation in abundance…

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By becoming that “source of light” (not to mention water, fertilizer, etc.) that students lean toward, to extend the metaphor, teachers can transform a classroom into a place characterized by energy, enthusiasm, responsible behavior, and quality learning.

The Motivation Continuum
Motivation is not a fixed commodity that you either have or don’t have. We all experience a wide range of motivation, depending on the situation and task at hand. Take shopping, for example. Some readers will be thinking, “YES! I could shop ‘til I drop!” Others may be thinking, “No, thanks! I’d rather do almost anything than deal with the traffic, parking, and salespeople.” Many readers fall somewhere in between these extremes; shopping is something they can take or leave. Deci and Ryan (2002) describe motivation as a continuum (Figure 1). Behavior can generally be classified as being amotivated, completely “lacking the intention to act” (p. 17); extrinsically motivated, behaving to attain some kind of reward or to avoid punishment; or intrinsically motivated, doing something “out of interest or inherent satisfaction” (p. 17).

Deci and Ryan break down these three general categories of behavior into six levels. I have assigned these levels names that will help teachers understand the kinds of thinking and actions that accompany them. Students who are amotivated often think, “This has no value to me,” “I can’t do this,” and/or “I’m not doing it.” These students fall into two categories. The Withdrawn are those who become physically or mentally absent. The Antagonistic are those who become belligerent or defiant.

The next four levels are students who behave for extrinsic reason. The Sullen student thinks, “I’m only doing this for the reward or to avoid the punishment. I’ll do it, but only the absolute minimum.” This remark may come from the student who, when asked to write a 200-word essay, may stop at 200 words, whether he/she is in the middle of a sentence or not. The Compliant student behaves for slightly more intrinsic reasons, to avoid shame or to seek approval. These students seem dependent on others for their self-worth. They may be the students who check in...
with the teacher frequently, asking “Is this what you want? Am I doing this right?” These students will generally do what is asked of them as long as there is someone there to provide assurance. The Dutiful student has heard from parents and/or teachers that education is important, believes what he/she is being asked to do has value, and will generally do satisfactory work. Enthused students will work hard at a task because it will earn them something else they themselves value highly. For example, the Enthused may work hard in high school so they can get into a good college. This behavior is still extrinsically oriented, but is very close to being intrinsic. Enthused students are a pleasure to have in class.

Finally, the best way to describe the intrinsically motivated students is Inspired. They work hard simply because they love the work or the subject. They may be thinking, “I love math! Solving word problems is like working through a puzzle! It feels so good when I get the answer.” Inspired students thrive in educational settings (Deci & Ryan, p. 183). These students will work well beyond the well-designed rubric and achieve the highest quality learning. We find inspired students in school, but more frequently on the playing fields, in the art studio, or on the stage than in the classroom.

**The Good and Bad News**

While many of us are content to have compliant and dutiful students in our classrooms, we want our students to be as excited about learning as they are about extracurricular activities. The bad news is that we can’t make students motivated any more than we can make a plant grow. However, like the gardener who provides each plant with what it needs to thrive, we can create the conditions that will encourage students’ intrinsic motivation. We may not succeed in inspiring all of our students, but we can certainly influence them in ways that “bump them up a notch” along the motivation continuum. All we need to know is what those conditions are. This is where an understanding of Glasser’s Choice Theory (1998) is valuable.

Like plants that need fertile soil, water, and sunlight to thrive, human beings have fundamental requirements in order to live satisfying lives. According to Glasser, all behavior is motivated by five basic human needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun. If we can provide opportunities that help students satisfy these five needs, we will have taken a giant leap toward inspiring our students. If we instead unwittingly thwart their ability to meet their basic needs, students will be less motivated.

Out of the best of intentions, many teachers, especially when frustrated, tend to become increasingly controlling. However, the more the teacher is perceived as controlling, the less likely it is that students will
be intrinsically motivated. In fact, not only do controlling behaviors such as demanding, criticizing, “motivating through pressure” NOT work (Deci & Ryan, p. 186), they can actually decrease student motivation. Even “imposing extraneous rewards . . . effectively decrease(s) volition” (p. 107). Rewards and praise, strategies that all pre-service teachers have been trained to use, “are worse than useless – they are counterproductive” (p. 42). Using controlling teaching and managing strategies like those listed above to make students learn and achieve are as destructive as using too much fertilizer on a plant, hoping to make it grow. Instead, we can provide students with a needs-satisfying environment and watch them thrive.

**Survival**

“Anything we can do to help students feel a sense of physical and emotional safety and security will improve their social behavior and help them perform better academically” (Erwin, 2004). We can help students meet their survival needs by providing opportunities for water, snacks, and fresh air, for example. Some teachers encourage students to bring water bottles to class. Some have even done some fundraising and brought a water cooler into the classroom. Houseplants (school plants) are not only an excellent source of oxygen, they enhance the classroom’s ambiance. Structuring classes with effective procedures and routines provides students with a sense of order and security. These structures may include procedures for entering the room and getting immediately engaged, for getting the teacher’s attention, for handing in assignments, for getting into pairs or groups, for example. Providing students with clear academic and behavioral expectations eliminates the fear of the unknown, again developing a safe environment, as does eliminating the use of criticism, sarcasm, and intimidation.

**Love and Belonging**

A great deal of research supports Glasser’s theory regarding this need. Not only are “[t]rusting student-teacher relationships . . . essential for learning” (Bryk & Schneider, p.31), but they are . . . crucial for promoting internalization” of motivation (Deci & Ryan, p. 19). There are many ways teachers can create positive, trusting relationships with and among students. First, greet students by name at the door, and maybe, depending on their age, welcome them to class with a special handshake. One of the best ways to build relationships
is to have fun together, so you may want to begin the year with some teambuilding activities and games. Use teambuilding activities throughout the year as well to maintain the positive relationships you develop at the beginning. Integrating cooperative learning into your classroom is a great way to help students meet their need to belong, and, used effectively, it is an extremely successful instructional method. Attending extracurricular events like games, plays, and concerts sends a powerful positive message to students. Finally, holding regular class meetings can develop and maintain a strong sense of community.

**Power**

Glasser defines power as gaining useful knowledge and skills, receiving recognition, and being listened to. Ironically, while empowering students to live successful lives is the primary mission of the school, power is one of the needs students find most difficult to achieve in academic classes. We can help students feel empowered by teaching useful information and skills and by discussing how what we are teaching is important, useful, or necessary. Inviting students’ input into the curriculum is a great way to generate enthusiasm while giving students ownership. Other ways of helping students gain power include teaching to a variety of learning styles (somatic/kinesthetic, auditory, visual, intellectual) and using a mastery learning approach: if students don’t achieve mastery (usually a B or better) on an important assessment, let the students improve their performance or demonstrate their learning in a different way, one which plays to their strengths (or intelligence). A highly effective empowering strategy, one that all teachers can employ, is to involve students in developing class rules or behavioral guidelines.

**Freedom**

Freedom includes the need for independence, autonomy, and novelty: “[S]tudents benefit when teachers support their autonomy” (Deci & Ryan, p. 183). One way teachers can help students meet this need is by offering students choices: choices of seats, choices of partners, choices involving the order of the day’s (week’s) agenda, and, maybe most importantly, choices in assessment. Provide them with a list of the learning you want them to demonstrate, and give them a list of choices of learning to hunt through play, for example. Children and adults learn all kinds of things through play, but sometimes fun is just that, fun. A classroom that encourages a responsible amount of play and humor is a place students will look forward to being a part of. Some ways of injecting the classroom with a much-needed dose of fun include playing

- **Intellectual games**: mental math, lateral thinking puzzles, brain teasers;
- **Physical games**: energizers and adventure-based learning activities;
- **Drama games**: tongue twisters, pantomime, charades, role playing;
- **Learning games**: review and check for understanding.

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**All higher animals play, and through play learn important life skills**

how they can do it (Note: the younger the student, the shorter the list of choices). (Caution: You will most likely need to have a discussion about how with every freedom, comes a responsibility.) Another way to help students feel free is to encourage movement; use kinesthetic learning strategies and/or learning centers. Differentiating instruction, taking field trips, using energizers, and having guest speakers adds novelty and variety to the classroom.

**Fun**

Fun is “the genetic reward for learning” (Glasser, p. 41). All higher animals play, and through play learn important life skills. Kittens

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**Implications**

To extend the analogy, my colleague introduced with his “phototropic” remark: we can either treat our students like potted plants, arranging them in neat rows in our classroom, throwing information at them like plant food, and hoping they will digest it; or we can be intentional about nurturing their needs, giving them fertile soil (survival), attention (love and belonging), sunlight (power), plenty of garden space (freedom), and water (fun). By providing our students with what they need, they will not sit sullenly or barely comply with our requests, leaning toward the light, so to speak. Instead they will blossom, becoming enthusiastic, even inspired learners! As I say in The Classroom of Choice (ASCD, 2004), by giving students what they need, we will get what we want.

Jon Erwin is a former secondary English teacher and staff development specialist. Author of The Classroom of Choice (ASCD, 2004), which includes almost 200 specific strategies for appealing to students’ intrinsic motivation, Jon is currently an independent consultant, speaker, and trainer. For more information on Jon’s book or the services he can provide, email him at
Discovering Intelligence Students Didn’t Know They Had

Peter B. Holtz and Karen Langlais

It’s not easy being 14. Caught between the sheltered years of elementary school and the added responsibility of high school, our 8th grade students have trouble figuring out who they are each morning. Then we ask them to settle into our classrooms and learn! We may not be able to help our students understand all the challenges they are navigating, but we can help them to understand themselves a little better. To do this, we introduce a unit of study that makes the students themselves the central topic and introduces them to a new way of thinking about themselves as learners. It gives us a better picture of who they are too. Each fall we introduce our students to Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI).

Reducing Preconceptions

By the time students reach the 8th grade, they have already decided what kind of students they are. They have eight years of prior experience in schools, filled with successes and failures, to help them define their abilities. They know who the “smart” kids are, and they know if they belong in that category. In order to help them to understand their preconceptions, we first ask them how they define intelligence in their peers. “How do you know that a classmate is intelligent?” Not surprisingly, most of them identify good grades in school as indicators of intelligence in classmates. When we ask them to think of adults in their lives whom they see as intelligent, their responses are more diverse. They identify parents who know lots of facts or are helpful with homework, but they also identify adults who always know what to say to make them feel better, or who can fix almost anything, or who display exceptional creativity. When we probe more deeply, we discover that many of these adults, whom they perceive to be intelligent, did not do particularly well in school when they were students. At this point, we are ready to consider a new definition of intelligence.

Once students are willing to expand their understanding of intelligence, we ask them to think about what they do well, not just inside school, but also in their world outside of school. Instead of the reading and writing tasks we value in school, the responses we get include such activities as: juggle, groom a horse, keep secrets, take care of two toddlers all day, play the flute, do a 900 on my snowboard, shoot 3-pointers, use sarcasm well, memorize song lyrics, fix up my bike, write poems, manage my cell phone bill, run, draw cartoons, and many others. The variety of responses is as diverse as the students themselves. The ability to fix the engine on a dirt bike, or to console a friend in need, or to throw a nasty curve ball, is not traditionally rewarded in schools, so students often don’t equate them with signs of their intelligence. But Gardner defines intelligence as “the human ability to solve problems, or to make something that is valued in one or more cultures” (Checkley, p. 8), and the skills that our 8th graders do well are “creations” that are valued in the culture of teenagers. These are the signs of intelligence, we tell them, if you consider Gardner’s view of what it means to be “smart.”

Building a New Framework for Intelligence

Using Gardner’s theory, our goal is to expand our students’ understanding of intelligence and then to help them recognize it in themselves. To do this, we need to make Gardner’s theory accessible to them, so they can begin to construct their own intelligence pro-
file. This is a process that takes several days of classroom activities – we didn’t learn it until we were in graduate school, after all – and we do get our share of blank looks in the beginning, but the understanding comes. To stimulate discussion about the different ways people can demonstrate intelligence, students participate in an interactive, 10-minute “Intelligence Hunt”. Armed with pen and a list of activities, they search among their classmates for a someone who can whistle Beethoven’s Fifth or sing the first two lines of a favorite song; sketch an electrical circuit; recite a few lines of a favorite poem; multiply 17 x 25 in her head; share two personal goals he has; or call out the first and last names of every member of the class. When we discuss the activity, students all admit that some of these tasks seem harder than others, but they differ on which were challenging and which were not. We ask them to consider why this may be.

Next, we use a Power Point presentation on Gardner’s theory as an introduction to the eight intelligences. Some students have heard of MI, but most are getting their first taste. At this point, we ask only that the students understand the underlying principle of Gardner’s theory – that there are many ways in which one can be intelligent, not just those that we reward in school. Briefly we discuss each intelligence, and we identify examples or indications of each to which students can relate. The work to achieve greater understanding comes later. After this presentation, we have students complete a MI survey, one of many that can be found online, and from their results, they create a multi-colored graph to illustrate visually their various strengths. Using this variety of learning experiences, designed to activate several of the intelligences, students begin to draw conclusions about their own strengths as learners. Next, the class moves into the research stage, during which they work to gain a better understanding of each intelligence. In small groups, students use a variety of reference materials to research one of the eight intelligences while tak-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intelligence</th>
<th>Definition (in your words)</th>
<th>Indications of Intelligence</th>
<th>Those who use it</th>
<th>Examples in YOU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal/Linguistic</td>
<td>strength in reading and writing, listening and speaking, words and language</td>
<td>memory recall; skill in reading, writing, public speaking; teach, explain ideas well; enjoy word games, poetry, humor; foreign and/or native language ability</td>
<td>teacher, writer, poet, journalist, politician, comedian orator, editor, lawyer, songwriter public speaker,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logical/Mathematical</td>
<td>strength in working with numbers, patterns, and operations; experimental thinking</td>
<td>good at math, able to do problems in your head; think logically; enjoy puzzles and logic games; experiment with things you don't understand</td>
<td>banker, accountant, scientist (physicist, astronomer, chemist,) researcher, architect, carpenter, contractor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musical/Rhythmic</td>
<td>strength in recognizing and learning rhythms and patterns in music; sensitivity to sounds and tones</td>
<td>recognize and remember songs; sing or play an instrument, tap or “drum” on desks; hum or whistle; enjoy rhythmic poetry; learn melodies, harmonize</td>
<td>musician, singer, composer, poet, choreographer, conductor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual/Spatial</td>
<td>strength in visualizing, thinking in pictures, working with images, and understanding spatial relationships</td>
<td>able to visualize or imagine, think in pictures; draw, doodle, paint; photography, sculpture</td>
<td>artist, pilot, photographer, sailor, surgeon, designer, architect, athlete (golf, soccer, football, field hockey, tennis, lacrosse)</td>
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<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>Definition (in your words)</td>
<td>Indications of Intelligence</td>
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<td>Examples in YOU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bodily/Kinesthetic</td>
<td>strength in using the body (hands, fingers, arms and legs, etc.) to create something or solve problems</td>
<td>flexibility, strength, fine motor control, hand-eye coordination; good working with hands to play or to fix things; athletic ability, balance</td>
<td>dancer, actor, athlete, magician, gymnast, artist, mechanic, carpenter, builder, clown, mime</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>strength in understanding and working with other people</td>
<td>social, have lots of friends, enjoy hosting, work well with others, enjoy chatting and gossiping, sensitive to the moods and feelings of others, work cooperatively</td>
<td>salesperson, politician, teacher, social worker, leader, organizer, team captain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
<td>strength in self-awareness and understanding one’s own feelings and emotions</td>
<td>write in a journal; like to be alone, think by oneself; enjoy yoga or meditation; know own strengths and weaknesses; self-confident; metacognitive; self-aware</td>
<td>novelist, social worker, yoga instructor, monk or nun, psychologist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalist</td>
<td>strength in discerning details and differences; appreciating nature and its subtleties; classifying objects by common traits</td>
<td>understanding and appreciating nature; observing, recording, classifying, identifying nature; forecasting; good at cooking</td>
<td>botanist, geologist, rancher, nature guide, farmer, chef, forest ranger, gardener</td>
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Classing notes. These reference materials include charts, diagrams, descriptions, and non-fiction readings, including Gardner’s own explanations of each intelligence, and they provide information to students at all different reading levels. By reading through the reference materials, each group comes up with a definition of their assigned intelligence, indicators of the intelligence, and examples of professions that rely on it. We then bring the class back together, and students take notes while each group teaches the intelligence to the rest of the class. Once students have a deeper understanding of the specific intelligences, they add to their notes specific examples of ways that they use each intelligence in their own lives. By the end of this research phase, students have an intelligence profile that includes some of the ways in which they use each of the intelligences and helps them identify those that are strengths.
Sharing the Learning
After students have identified their own strengths of intelligence, it’s time for them to show their stuff. The students prepare a 2 to 3 minute oral presentation to discuss one of their strongest intelligences, and they tell all the ways they use it. After introducing the assignment, we each model a speech about one of our strongest intelligences and present it to our students as a model of what we expect from them. In the presentation, students define the intelligence in their own words, present at least three specific examples of how they use the intelligence, including one that shows how it impacts their learning in school, and provide an object or demonstration as a visual example. As each student takes a turn presenting, teachers and classmates view a snapshot of each unique learner. These snapshots come complete with harmonicas, skits, diaries, skateboards, paintings, shell collections, field hockey sticks, cheese cakes, and various other visual examples of intelligence in action.

Bringing Theory to Practice
Our MI unit culminates in a presentation, but we don’t view this as the end of our work with MI. Rather, it’s one step near the beginning of an 8th grade year of self-discovery. At the start of our MI unit, we tell our students that they will be learning something that they can use. Simply arriving at an intelligence profile is not enough; students need to understand what they have discovered about themselves so that they can put it to use, both as students and as people. Gardner notes, “You have to use the profile to understand the ways in which you seem to learn easily. And, from there, determine how to use those strengths to help you become more successful in other endeavors. Then, the profile becomes a way for you to understand your

With a new understanding of intelligence, and specific evidence of the ways in which they are intelligent, students better understand their strengths.

self better, and you can use that understanding to catapult yourself to a better level of understanding or to a higher level of skill” (Checkley, 10). We ask students to utilize what they now know about themselves, as they make decisions in and outside of school.

Conclusion
Teaching eighth graders about MI is a valuable way to engage students in their own learning and to help teachers better understand their students, as individual learners and as people. Our knowledge of our students is no longer limited by what they show us in the classroom, such as the books they choose for independent reading or the skill and ease with which they write. We know them better as people who are dancers, bike mechanics, babysitters, photographers, poets, ball-players, musicians, or cooks. We use this information to design and customize our curriculum to their interests and abilities. In addition to showing off their talents and abilities, the students have a new tool to help them be more successful in school. With a new understanding of intelligence, and specific evidence of the ways in which they are intelligent, students better understand their strengths. They also have an awareness of areas that are not strengths, helping them to understand better some of the challenges they face as learners. Being a teenager is hard work, and being a student at the same time is even more demanding. By helping our students to understand themselves better, we can motivate them and make their job of learning a little easier.


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Reaching, Teaching, and Knowing:
Eight Conditions That Make a Difference

Pamela S. Flood, Russell J. Quaglia, Michael J. Corso

School bells ring across the nation and students amble into the first period of the day. Many then shuffle through multiple classes—classes that too often are disconnected from each other and the lives of the students. However, students report that some classes are exciting and invigorating. Researchers at the Center for Research and Educational Advancement at Endicott College (CREA) have observed students in math, science, English, foreign languages, art, and social studies who are excited, motivated, and willing to take on any challenge the teacher can dish out. What then are the differences between classes that ignite and classes that extinguish student interest, and why do some classes provide instruction that both students and teachers find engaging and meaningful?

CREA’s research has helped educators both nationally and internationally begin to answer these questions and apply the answers to their own school context. The research study we discuss in this article focuses on student aspirations. These aspirations are defined by the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations as, “an individual’s ability to identify and set goals for the future, while being inspired in the present to work toward those goals.” Quaglia and Fox (2003) identified eight conditions related to student aspirations: Belonging, Heroes, Sense of Accomplishment, Fun and Excitement, Curiosity and Creativity, Spirit of Adventure, Leadership and Responsibility, and Confidence to Take Action.

Assessing the 8 Conditions
To understand how students are experiencing these conditions within their schools CREA, in partnership with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), collected the responses of 22,870 students as part of a school self-study process. NEASC required that every student be surveyed. Thus, the results do not reflect a random sample, but rather the view of virtually all students in the schools surveyed.

To date, over 30 schools in cities and towns from throughout New England have engaged in this self-study. The schools surveyed represent a variety of school settings from small rural schools where the smallest population was 234 to large urban schools with the largest of these having a student population of 1872. The data also represents an equal distribution of male (n=11,224) and female (n=11,219) responses. In completing the survey, students were asked to give their opinion in response to various statements. The possible responses were based on a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. In Table 1, results are reported out as Total in Agreement representing an aggregate of students who answered Strongly Agree and Agree. This is disaggregated in the first two columns according to gender.

Findings
Our findings suggest that students feel disengaged from their learning, do not feel valued by their teach-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL IN AGREEMENT</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students respect one another.</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proud of my school.</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers respect students.</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teachers have time for me.</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td>62.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers at my school are concerned about my learning.</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers care about me as a person.</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students respect teachers.</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been recognized for something I have accomplished at school.</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am asked to apply what I am learning in class to my life outside of school.</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teachers are aware of my learning needs.</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teachers ask for my input to improve class instruction.</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel students have a say in important decisions made at my school.</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ers, are not being involved in the improvement process of their own learning, and have serious issues in the area of respect (Table 1). Less than half (45.6%) of the students see a connection to what they are learning and life outside of the classroom; only 53.5% believe teachers care about them as a person; 57.8% believe teachers are concerned about their learning; 52.9% think their teachers are aware of their learning needs; 48.4% report they have been recognized for something they have accomplished at school; and, sadly, only 62.6% believe teachers have time for them. In the area of respect, 54.6% of the students believe teachers respect them; 31.8% report that students respect teachers; and, most astonishingly, 31.2% of the students report that students respect each other. A crisis of respect exists in our schools and we are naive to think this is not affecting student learning. This data could explain why only 46.9% of the students claim they are proud of their schools.

**Creating Meaningful Learning Opportunities**

There have been many calls for teachers to "teach for meaning". The critical question in considering this charge is: "Meaning for whom?" CREA's research reveals that educational meaning is derived as much from the context of the school and class as from the content of the instruction. Classes and schools that provide meaningful educational opportunities for students embody the conditions known to support student aspirations. A process for turning the research findings into practice is offered below. Following is a description of each of the conditions, with suggestions for actions that can lead to changing student perceptions.

**Belonging**

Students who experience a sense of belonging believe they are unconditionally accepted, valuable members of the school. When students feel that they belong, they feel safe in, connected to, and respected at their school while retaining their sense of individuality. Think about how your students feel about their school communities. In what ways do you provide your students opportunities to express their individuality in a culture of acceptance and appreciation?

The Center for Research and Educational Advancement's research reveals that educational meaning is derived as much from the context of the school and class as from the content of the instruction.

One way to respond to these issues is to brainstorm with your students. Ask them what it feels like when they are accepted and belong to a community. Ask them what kinds of activities, behaviors, and so forth contribute to those feelings. Work with the faculty, students, and staff to examine the responses and create a belonging plan of action.

**Heroes**

Heroes exist in all schools and communities. Students recognize people they respect and to whom they feel personally connected. They seek out adults to whom they can turn for advice, who will listen, or simply have time for them. Teachers, coaches and other adults in the school have a tremendous opportunity to make a difference in the lives of their students and become their heroes. Do you know the heroes in your students' lives? Ask students to identify who they look up to and why. (This may take a bit of probing to move them from sports heroes or movie stars.) Then ask what qualities they look for in a mentor or hero and how the school can help them find someone to inspire and believe in them.

**Sense of Accomplishment**

In addition to having academic accomplishments, students are seen as achievers if they put forth effort, persevere, and exhibit citizenship. Schools that foster a sense of accomplishment define achievement beyond academics and give students every opportunity to be successful. How does your school differentiate assessment and allow students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do both in and out of class? How do you let students know you are proud of their accomplishments? Ask your students if they feel that the school community is aware of their accomplishments. Find out what those accomplishments are and, together, create ways to celebrate.

**Fun and Excitement**

Students who are constantly presented with a variety of challenges and unusual learning opportunities are inspired to push themselves further than they thought possible. They are interested in daily learning in and outside of school and see a challenge in new ideas. Fun and excitement also exist for students when teachers and those around them display a natural enthusiasm for what they are doing. How do you connect learning that is engaging and meaningful to your students' needs and interests? Ask your students to
describe three exciting learning experiences they have encountered. Together analyze these experiences to understand what it that created that excitement and discuss how it could be included in other lessons.

Curiosity and Creativity
Students who display the condition of curiosity and creativity are characterized by an eagerness to learn new and interesting things. They are not afraid to take the next step to search for and provide answers to complex problems. Teachers who foster curiosity and creativity develop lessons that connect their discipline to the everyday life of students, to other subjects, and to students’ future goals. How many opportunities do you provide for students to become passionate about their learning? Ask students what they want to know. Connect the content of your courses whenever possible to students’ natural curiosity and questions about their world and lives. Let the students assist in the development of units of study or curricular projects.

Spirit of Adventure
Students who display a spirit of adventure are not afraid to ask questions and face unfamiliar challenges based on sound information. Students who are provided with the opportunities and support to make decisions and to understand the consequences of their decisions are willing to venture into unknown learning territories. This requires teachers who are aware of students learning needs and willing to adapt in order to keep all students in their challenge zone. How do you encourage and support students as they accept new challenges? Work with students to help them identify the challenges they face, from presenting in front of a class, to running a marathon, to taking an AP course. Then make sure that they receive encouragement from their mentor, hero, teachers, and peers to face this challenge.

There have been many calls for teachers to "teach for meaning". The critical question in considering this charge is: "Meaning for whom?"

Leadership and Responsibility
Students become responsible leaders only when the school community allows them to be decision-makers. Students need to understand that their opinion matters and that they have a responsibility for their own learning and for the functioning of the school. But first they must be provided real opportunities to display leadership and responsibility on a regular basis. How do you support students as they take on leadership roles and work to accept responsibility for all of their actions? By incorporating many of the suggestions above you will be providing students with authentic opportunities for taking on leadership and responsibility for their learning, creating a school climate that is supportive and challenging, and investing in their own learning. Take time to discuss with students what they would like to do in terms of leadership within the school. What are some of the ways that students see that they can take the lead that perhaps the teachers and administrators have not considered? Through these opportunities for working together and learning from each other student can experience the authentic rewards of leadership.

Confidence to Take Action
Students who are confident believe they can achieve and are not driven by peer pressure in making decisions. Students who are taught to think critically and problem solve believe they can be successful and are confident to take action. They believe they can make a difference through their actions. How do you support students to act responsibly on their beliefs? Discuss the goals and mission of the school and ask the students how they feel these goals align with their aspirations. Together develop a plan that allows students multiple ways to recognize and discuss what they believe in and why; let them find ways to act on these beliefs in ways that are meaningful and add to the climate of the school.

Conclusion
The eight conditions offer a set of guiding principles that can provide a map to ensure that students and teachers create genuine meaning through their educational exchanges. The conditions help us to connect with students’ interests. They help us to understand what students need in order to draw meaning from their learning experiences and become life-long learners.

The Educator as Caregiver, Mentor, and Role Model: The Importance of Educator/Student Relationships
Paul S. Haughey

As I begin my administrative career as an assistant principal for Uxbridge High School, I often reflect upon my classroom experiences and my work as a classroom teacher. I recognize the impact that I’ve had on students both within and outside of school. The design of an effective learning experience for students is created by the relationships between educators and students. The influence we have, whether we are classroom teachers, or administrators, both in school and in the community, can be a powerful one.

The Educator’s Role
Just as at the heart of health care reform is the nurse, one who provides direct care to the patient and is probably the single most important individual in making sure someone who is sick gets better, the same holds true in education reform. The educator is the single most important person in making sure students are successful in learning and in their communities.

In a study performed at Boston College in 2003, Thaidora Katsos recognized the need for more caring, connected human relationships in schooling. It is the educator, the teacher, who stands side-by-side with the student as a guide through the learning process; it is the educator who develops close relationships with families.

Russell J. Quaglia, Ed.D. is the President/Founder of the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations. He is also the Executive Director of the Center for Research and Educational Advancement at Endicott College and a professor of Education. He has been described by NBC-TV Today Show as America’s foremost authority on the development and achievement of student aspirations. Dr. Quaglia may be reached at rquaglia@endicott.edu.

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Relationship Building
Nichols states that the following factors contribute to relationship teaching: sharing personal information, showing personal interest in students, being involved in campus activities, assisting students with community activities, and support with academics (2005). Note that the first three factors do not pertain to academic support.

Those who work with young people must remember that we are caregivers, mentors, and even role models at all times within our community. When going out on a Saturday night with my friends, I expect to meet students. Recently, when my fiancé and I went to a movie, a group of my students saw us and immediately started talking to me. When the lights dimmed and the movie began, the students sat down in front of us and watched the film. At the end of the night, we all walked out together and discussed the film briefly in the parking lot. On Monday morning my students were all talking about the film, about sitting near us during the movie, and about hanging out in the parking lot at the end of the night.

Educators learn quickly how to create appropriate and welcoming relationships with students outside.
of school. This building of relationships extends beyond classroom and weekday hours. Wherever we are, we model for students how to be socially appropriate in a public setting.

The Rules of the Road
My students learn that in order to earn my respect, they have to do four things all the time, no matter where we are, in the classroom or out in the public. We call these the Rules of the Road. 

Be respectful of each other, of themselves, and of me. 
Be responsible and follow the guidance of adults. 
Be cooperative at all times. 
(My students do not have to like each other, but they do have to get along. Disagreements do not excuse them from doing their work, meeting their deadlines or not cooperating with one another.)

Remember the importance of effort!

Over time students recognize that when we all follow the Rules of the Road, we work on establishing meaningful relationships. My students realize that I care for them beyond the classroom walls.

Thomas Lickona, author of *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility* (1992), offers some pointers for educators to consider when working with young people. He urges educators to avoid favoritism, sarcasm, embarrassing students, or any other behavior that undermines a student’s dignity and self-esteem. Lickona tells us to be fair and to develop the kind of rapport that leads students to be open to the teacher’s positive influence. Educators must respond to wrong or incomplete answers in a way that affirms whatever is good about a student’s response and reduces fear of making mistakes. Remember it is not a mistake if eventually the student gets it right.

Educators must respond to wrong or incomplete answers in a way that affirms whatever is good about a student’s response and reduces fear of making mistakes

Lickona discusses the benefits of combining good example and direct moral teaching. For example, educators offer objective moral commentary that helps students to understand why behaviors such as cheating, stealing, bullying, vandalism, and violence are hurtful, wrong, and have long-lasting negative effects. Using storytelling in a social studies class, for example, is one way that history can reinforce moral teaching. Students learn to care deeply about moral values such as honesty and respect.

I believe that good educators mentor students one-by-one. They discover, affirm, and develop each student’s special talents and strengths. They compliment students through written notes. Writing comments in student journals is a way to make a personal connection with every student, build self-esteem, and offer advice on dealing with social-moral problems.

Hope Despite Frustration
Educators have a very real role to play in young people’s lives as caregivers, role models, and mentors, but there are limits to what can be done. Without help from home, one educator may not be able to turn around the growing number of difficulties or challenges of the children placed in his or her charge. Additionally, many times when students show little or no improvement at all, everyone involved in the learning process becomes frustrated. However, it is better for our young people to recognize our sincere attempts than to never have seen the attempts at all.

I am reminded of a young man I worked with many years ago. On a daily basis he told me how much he hated me, his family, and even his dog. Daily I wrestled to help him be organized, to gain his attention, to urge him to cooperate, and to earn his respect. I faced many challenges but remained committed to finding success. Communication through emails, letters, and phone calls continued between home and school for an entire year. His family was as dedicated as I was, but to no avail. His mother shed many tears, and his father grew increasing frustrated and upset.

By his sophomore year, this student had given up on school. As he walked out the door, I called out to him and told him I was here if he ever needed me. I had reached the limit of what I could do for him then, but I wanted him to hear that I still cared.

Eventually, this young man returned to school and last June, at the age of twenty, he crossed the podium with diploma in hand and a big smile on his face. His mom and dad glowed as he beamed with happiness and pride.

Both parties must recognize the reciprocal nature of the teacher-student alliance for the relationship to be successful (Tiberius, 1991). Before he lined up to receive his diploma, this student sought me out to thank me for everything I had ever done for him over the
years. He said that as a freshman he learned two important things in my class – the importance of working hard and the fact his teacher truly cared about him. According to Katsos, educators must recognize an obligation beyond academics. If students see themselves as valued, we can expect them to make positive contributions (2003). In the end, my commitment to this student’s success encouraged him to return to school.

The Lasting Impact of Relationships
To be an educator means recognizing the moral significance of social interactions. It means imagining the long-range effects of young people’s experiences at school and the impact those experiences can have on their values and character in the future. Both modeling and teaching values takes time, energy, and a great deal of patience.

Many of us went into teaching because of our love for young people or because we wanted to make a difference in students’ lives. We teach them right from wrong as well as mathematics, reading, and writing, all the while hoping that our efforts as educators will shape the kind of human beings we want our young people to become in the future.

To be an educator means recognizing the moral significance of social interactions

Educators must remember the impact we can have on students’ lives. We must make good choices as we develop relationships with our students. The difference we can make is powerful.


Paul S. Haughey, Ed.D. earned his doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Johnson and Wales University in 2002. He is currently an assistant principal at Uxbridge High School in Uxbridge, Massachusetts. Formerly he served as a program coordinator, a social studies teacher, and a varsity coach in the Bellingham Public Schools. Dr. Haughey may be reached at: phaughey@uxbridge.k12.ma.us

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Purpose
The Massachusetts Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development seeks to recognize outstanding mentors who are currently working successfully with new teachers.

Eligibility
Nominees should have five or more years of experience, modeling effective teaching, reflecting best practices and demonstrating skill in working with diverse student populations.

Application Process
Any teacher or administrator may nominate a mentor in his or her school or district; however, current members of the MASCD Board of Directors are ineligible to nominate or be nominated for this award. The nominator must submit 3 copies of the following in one packet to MASCD by April 1.

A letter of nomination, clearly addressing the items below, in 500 words or less:

How effectively the nominee communicates with new teachers

The nature and frequency of their meetings

How the nominee works with diverse student populations

How the nominee models effective teaching practices and structures opportunities to observe the new teacher’s classroom and to be observed by the new teacher

How the nominee coaches the new teacher on specific topics throughout the year

How the nominee promotes reflection and self-assessment

A letter of support from the new teacher of 250 words or less in response to the question: How has your mentor helped to improve your teaching practices? Include specific events or situations that highlight the effectiveness and impact of the mentor/new teacher relationship.

A statement from the nominee of 500 words or less in response to the questions: “Why do you mentor (a) new teacher(s)? In addition to the benefits to the new teachers, what are the professional benefits of mentoring to you and how have they improved your own practice?”

Recognition
Up to 3 award recipients will be selected by May 15. Recipients and their new teachers will be recognized in MASCD’s Perspectives. They will receive complimentary one year MASCD membership, copies of MASCD books, and complimentary registration for one MASCD institute.

The application form is found on page 17.
Person Nominated:_____________________________________________________

Role:_______________________________________________________________

School:_____________________________________________________________

Home Phone:________________________________________________________

Address:____________________________________________________________

City:_________________________ State:_______________ Zip:_______________

Email:______________________________________________________________

Name of Nominator:___________________________________________________

Work phone:__________________________________________________________

Relationship to Mentor:_______________________________________________

Email:______________________________________________________________

Send 3 copies of all materials by April 1 to:
MASCD, 19C Oak Street, Wellesley, MA 02482.
Thank you.
Perspectives Themes and Focus Questions for 2006

Massachusetts educators are encouraged to contribute to an upcoming issue of MASCD’s Perspectives. Authors who wish to contribute to any of the following issues should send to the publications chair (pace614@adelphia.net) a brief description of the proposed article. If your article is accepted for publication, the completed draft will be due by the deadline date listed below. We encourage authors to submit photographs, charts, and other graphics with their articles.

September 2006
DESIGNS FOR LEARNING

1. Does school structure/design determine student destiny?
2. What can high schools adopt from elementary and middle school design?
3. How do the values of educators and communities affect school design?
4. What mental models affect our conceptions about how schools should be designed and run? (Ex: tracking, traditional requirements, sequential courses, physical constraints, etc.)
5. What can we learn from alternative learning designs -- schools without walls, mentorships, charter school structures, non-graded classrooms, looping, schools within schools etc.?
6. What does the current research show about the effectiveness of high schools in America?
7. What is the impact thus far of the Gates Foundation grants?

Articles due May 1, 2006

Readers of Perspectives are urged to support House Bill 4157, An Act Relative to Teacher and Administrator Quality Throughout the Commonwealth.

Share the news... pass this MASCD publication on to a colleague today!!

The mission of the Massachusetts Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development is to promote quality teaching and learning in Massachusetts by fostering instructional and curriculum leadership. The purpose of MASCD Perspectives is to share diverse experiences and perspectives of educators across the Commonwealth and to stimulate discussion and further thought on educational topics relevant to this mission. Educators are invited to join MASCD by going to www.MASCD.org.
MASCD Programs

Transforming Learning Communities
Matt King, Teachers21
March 10 & 24, 2006
Registration Deadline February 28
North Shore Education Consortium
112 Sohier Road
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Repeat of June 2005

Collecting, Discussing & Analyzing Data
Nancy Gerzon,
Learning Innovations at WestEd
March 23 & April 10, 2006
Registration Deadline March 6
Woburn

Collecting, Discussing & Analyzing Data
Nick Hardy,
Learning Innovations at WestEd
April 26 & 27, 2006
Registration Deadline March 16
Falmouth

Getting Past the Jargon:
Sustaining Productive and Engaging Professional Learning Communities
John D’Auria & Matt King, Teachers21
June 26-27, 2006
Registration Deadline May 25
Radisson Plymouth Harbor

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Differentiated Instruction and UBD
with Jay McTighe & Carol Ann Tomlinson

Leadership That Works
with Brian McNulty

What Works in School
with Bob Marzano

Transforming Learning Communities
with John D’Auria & Matt King

and MORE!
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